

Health Care Ruling Won't Hit Tricare

By Leo Shane III

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WASHINGTON – Thursday's Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) could have far-reaching effects on American health care policy and politics over the next few years. What it won't do is affect any Tricare or Veterans Affairs health care coverage.

Lawmakers specifically exempted those systems from the health care debate in 2010, in response to concerns that the new rules and regulations could upset their patient care efforts. Congress also passed the Tricare Affirmation Act that year, adding an extra layer of exemption and protection.

Of course, military and veterans families still could see some changes under the new rules. Already, those health care systems have seen their policies updated to allow children under 26 to remain on their parents' plans, mirroring the larger ACA provisions.

And veterans ineligible or unwilling to use VA health care options will be affected by the larger changes in private health insurance.

Republican House leaders have promised to work to repeal the measure, but that's unlikely as long as Democrats hold onto power in the Senate and White House.